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June 17, 2011

Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 East Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20423

Dear Chairman Elliot:

We understand the Surface Transportation Board (STB) is holding hearings to review the competitive marketplace in which our nation's railroads operate. We recommend, as the Board ponders any new regulations, you take into consideration the many benefits the railroad industry has provided to our immediate region. The ability of railroads to continually invest in their infrastructures provides opportunity to create quality jobs, not only for their operations, but also for the many businesses that rely heavily on rail service throughout our bi-state region in western Illinois and eastern Iowa. Their presence supports an environment to attract new industry and investment.

We have a close working relationship with the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) and are constructing a large industrial park off their major west coast to Chicago mainline. UP has provided almost 14,000 feet of track, at greatly reduced cost, to provide access to almost 1,500 acres of land that is being developed by the City of Clinton to bring new development into a region that has suffered job and population loss over the last several decades. UP has been a great partner, and we have aligned our resources with them to make this development a success. Our region is served, as well, by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway who continue to invest in their infrastructures to provide the best service possible to industry.

Any policy that will negatively impact the railroads' financial health and ability to grow and improve will adversely affect the commerce and commodity flows that are vital to retaining jobs and attracting new ones. We urge the STB to maintain a balanced regulatory framework.

Sincerely,

Steven G. Ames  
President and CEO

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